

# The DARK BLOND

CHAPTER LII

"That's right, I figured you just wanted me to take a look at her," Norman said. "She's there now?" Norman inquired. "A few minutes ago," he said.

Norman's face showed sudden decision. He turned to Millicent. "I'm not going to take a look at this Phyllis until I get done with the car," he said. "I'm going to find out just what she's doing with a key to that apartment."

"I'm not going to expose you to the danger of going to the apartment," Millicent said. "It makes no difference what you may say, this is my going to keep you out of it."

"Please," she told him, placing her hand on his arm. "Please, Norman! Let me go with you. If there's danger, let's face it together."

"No," he said. "You've had more than your share."

He signaled a cab and gave the address of the apartment house.

Millicent pleaded with him, to no avail. He remained firm in his decision.

When they had arrived at the apartment house he gave the cab driver \$2, told him to drive Millicent around the corner, park the cab and wait.

"But, Norman," she said, "please let me go with you. I'll feel ever so much safer."

"No, you're going to stay here. This promise me you won't take any chances. Don't go in the apartment. Stay in the hallway."

He laughed reassuringly. "There's just a lone woman there," he pointed out, "and I want to ask her some questions. She may answer them and she may not, but she certainly isn't going to harm me. She can't slice off my head with a meat cleaver or pitch me out of the window or..."

"Please, Norman!" she protested.

"I'm not a goose, Millicent. You've been in 10 times as much danger as I could possibly encounter in going to the apartment."

"But there might be someone else there."

"If there is," he told her, "it will be Bob Case or Dick Gentry, and if either of those birds tries to get rough with me I wouldn't want anything better than to give them a punch in the jaw."

"But, Norman, they may be armed. If they're mixed in this thing they're desperate, and..."

"Oh, hush!" he told her. "I can take care of myself. Don't worry about that. What's bothering me is the idea of leaving you here alone."

The cab driver turned and regarded them curiously. Norman flashed her a warning glance, turned abruptly from the cab and walked to the apartment house entrance. She watched his eyes as he pressed several of the buttons opposite different names, and noted with some measure of relief that he had not given Phyllis Faulstich warning of his visit by ringing her bell. That would give him the advantage of taking her by surprise, and Millicent was grateful that he had thought to take this precaution.

She saw him press against the door with his right hand, heard a faint buzz and saw the door open. He turned to give her a reassuring wave of his hand and then entered the apartment house.

The cab slid smoothly into motion, around the corner and parked at the curb.

"This okay, Miss?" asked the driver. "I would prefer you to wait at the front of the apartment house," she told him.

"But these were my instructions and a driver doesn't argue with instructions that are backed up with \$2 a good hard money?"

He hesitated a moment, then pulled down the flag in the meter and said, "I'm going to give your boy friend

a break. It'd probably be a while before I got another fare anyway, so I'm not going to charge him waiting time if he isn't over 10 minutes. After that I'll have to make a charge."

"He won't be over 10 minutes," Millicent asserted. "It shouldn't take him much over five."

She glanced at her wrist watch and visioned Norman's progress in her mind.

He should now be leaving the elevator at the third floor. He would walk down the corridor, knock on the door of Apartment 300. Then what would happen? Would the woman come to the door? Would she talk with him? Would she resent his questions? Would he be able to get any information from her? Would he enter the apartment and, if so, would he take precautions to make certain there were no other persons in the apartment? The cab driver settled down behind the wheel, his manner that of one who must, of necessity, spend a great deal of his time waiting. A matter of 10 minutes meant virtually nothing to him.

But it seemed to Millicent that the minutes were an interminable length of time. She watched the minute hand of her wrist watch crawling slowly around the dial. She had schooled herself to believe that Norman would return within 10 minutes, and so it gave her a distinct shock when the 10 minutes had passed and Norman had not returned.

When 15 minutes elapsed Millicent felt something akin to panic. The cab driver turned to her, grinned in a friendly manner and said, "Well, I guess your friend will be out pretty quick, eh?"

"Yes," she said. "Think he's going to be in a hurry?"

"He may be."

"Well, I'll have the motor running and be ready to go," the driver told her. "I'll have to start my meter going on waiting time though."

He started the motor and the meter, and Millicent, feeling as though she had lost her last friend, fought against the panic which surged up within her. Previously she had visioned Norman going down the corridor—big, dependable, aggressive and formidable. She had pictured him knocking at the door of the apartment, dominating the situation. Now her mind tortured her with mental visions of Norman in danger, being invited into the apartment by some woman whose smiling eyes masked a sinister purpose. She pictured men concealed behind chairs and doors, weapons clamped in their hands. She could almost hear the sounds of thudding blows, of Norman's futile struggles, of...

She resolutely determined to banish such things from her mind. After all, worrying would not help any, and Norman might have been placed in such a position that he needed time to force the truth from this woman's lips.

"Suppose we should run back to the apartment house, Miss?" the cab driver inquired. "I don't like to run up a lot of waiting time if your friend doesn't want the cab any more."

Millicent looked at her watch. It had been 22 minutes since Norman had entered the apartment.

"Yes," she said. "Go back to the apartment house."

The cab driver turned the car in the middle of the block, rounded the corner and drew her up in front of the apartment house.

"You going in?" he inquired.

"Yes," Millicent said. "I'm going in."

She climbed from the cab and pushed her finger against the button opposite the name of one of the tenants, a name which she had selected at random.

Nothing happened. Impatiently she jabbed the button below that and, after a moment, the speaking tube at her ear gave a shrill whistle and a voice said, "Who is it?"

Millicent had thought of no answer. She had not anticipated such a situation.

(To Be Continued)

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The sailor hat has indeed come into its own this season. And when you crocheted you can feel doubly smart! This one is in a lacy design and if you prefer a floppy hat you can just omit the stiffening. The purse—a smart and roomy one—repeats the lacy stripe of the hat. Make them of string or linen floss and know you're well-dressed when you carry these matching crocheted accessories.

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Send 10 cents in stamps or coin (col preferred) for this pattern to **McGraw-Hill, Needlework Dept.**

## LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

The Best of the Nation's "Human-est" and Funniest Comics On This Page Daily

## Her Reward

By HAROLD GRAY

IT WAS SLUGG. ALL RIGHT—IT MUST HAVE BEEN NEARLY RAN OVER YOU—WELL, THAT SETTLES ONE THING—

WHAT'S THAT, "DADDY"?

THERE'S A TWELVE FOOT FENCE AROUND THIS WHOLE PLACE, AND ALL ALONG THE FENCE ARE GUARDS—WELL, YOU'RE NOT TO STEP OUTSIDE OF THAT FENCE, ANNIE—NOT FOR ANYTHING—UNDERSTAND?

YES SIR—

JACK—HIRE MORE GUARDS IF YOU NEED THEM—SEE THAT OUR OUTSIDE FENCE IS PATROLLED EVERY MINUTE, NIGHT AND DAY—LET IN NO ONE WHO HASN'T BUSINESS IN THE PLANT—

YES SIR—

IF I HADN'T BEEN OUT IN TH' WOODS "DADDY" WOULDN'T KNOW SLUGG HAD BEEN SNOOPIN' AROUND—BUT CAUSE I SAW HIM IN TH' WOODS, I CAN'T GO OUTSIDE TH' BIG FENCE ANY MORE—WHAT A BUM BREAK THAT IS—EH, SANDY?

ARF—

## TIM TYLER'S FLYING LUCK

By LYMAN YOUNG

FRIENDS, THE HOUR TO STRIKE HAS COME! ONCE WE HAVE OVER-POWERED THE PALACE GUARD AND THROWN QUEEN ANTONIA INTO THE DUNGEON, THE CITY WILL BE OURS—

GOOD LUCK TO YOU, FRIENDS—SOME OF US MAY NEVER SEE THE DAWN—

WE'RE READY, MARCEL—LET'S GO!

YES, MAJOR LATOUR—HE HAS SIGHTED SPEED MARTIN'S AIRPLANE—BURNED TO A CRISP, SIR!

HAS LT. LE BRUN RADIOED ANY MESSAGE?

AT FORT BELGOR!

THE REBELS OPEN THEIR ATTACK ON THE PALACE GUARDS!

## BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

By MARTIN

WELL, HERE WE ARE, BACK HOME! 'COMON, WE'D BETTER SCRAM OVER TO TH' STORE AN' SEE HOW THINGS ARE GOIN'!

HEY!

OH, I FORGOT! TEE HEE

TSK TSK! IF TH' REPORTERS COULD ONLY SEE YUH, NOW—TH' ONE N' ONLY LUCKY LEE! MEBBE YOU'RE SLIPPIN'!

HOW COME? WOT IF TH' SHARKS DID GET MY PANTS—Y'NOTICE I WASN'T INSIDE OF 'EM

## BRINGING UP FATHER

By GEORGE McMANUS

GO DOWN STAIRS AND TALK TO MRS. ETTA MOLOGY. SHE'S VERY INTELLECTUAL AND SHE LIKES MUSIC

SHE WOULD

I CERTAINLY AM A GLUTTON FOR PUNISHMENT

HOW ARE YOU, MRS. MOLOGY?

I CALLED TO ASK MRS. JIGGS TO GO AND SEE STANILAUS BLEATBLITSKY, THE BASSO PROFUNDO, WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME ALONG?

NO THANKS—I DON'T LIKE WRESTLING MATCHES

## THIMBLE THEATRE

Starring POPEYE

NOW SHOWING—"THE CATTLE BOAT"

MONDAY—"WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE"

By E. C. SEGAR

I AM QUITE WILLING TO FURNISH THE SHIP, BUT I REALLY BELIEVE THAT YOU AND CASTOR SHOULD FURNISH THE PROVISIONS

I THOUGHT THERE WAS A CATCH IN IT—HAH! WE FURNISH THE CASH—POEY!

BUT, CASTOR, IT'S NO MORE THAN RIGHT—HERE'S MY SHARE—AFTER ALL, IT'S HIS SHIP

OH, ALL RIGHT, BUT I STILL THINK WIMPY IS WDRKING US

—AND I ASSURE YOU THAT I SHALL PROCURE THE VERY BEST FOOD OBTAINABLE

MUST I REPEAT MY ORDER, AGAIN, SIR? I SAID—"FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS' WORTH OF CANNED HAMBURGERS"

## OUT OUR WAY

By WILLIAMS

TOBIE, YOU'VE EARNED A GOOD REST AFTER ALL THESE YEARS ON THIS BIG MACHINE, SO I'M GOIN' TO GIVE YOU A GOOD, SOFT JOB ON THE LITTLE GEAR CUTTER IN THE GEAR ROOM—YOU WON'T HAVE HARDLY A THING TO DO.

WHY—UH—THANKS—AH—VERY MUCH—I—T—UH—WELL, IT'S VERY NICE OF YOU.

I GUESS YOU'D CALL THAT DIPLOMACY, WOULDN' YOU? ONE GUY FILLIN' TH' OTHER FULLA BOLONEY.

THAT'S JUST WHAT'S TH' MATTER WITH TH' WORLD TODAY—BOLONEY! IF HED SAID, TOBIE, YOU'RE THRU! YOU'RE A HAS—BEEN! YOU AIN'T NO GOOD ON THIS JOB NO MORE, AN' TOBIE'D SAID, THAT'S A DIRTY DEAL! THEN YOU'D HAVE TWO GUYS WHO TRUST EACH OTHER.

## OUR BOARDING HOUSE

By AHERN

—AND, IN CONCLUSION, GENTLEMEN, LET ME ADD—THERE IS ONLY ONE SURE WAY TO END WAR, AND THAT IS THE HOOPLE PLAN—LET EACH NATION MAKE ITS BULLETS OUT OF GOLD!—HAW—THAT'S DROLL LOGIC

WELL, MEN—TH' SUMMER SEASON IS OFFICIALLY ON! THERE'S OL' HOOPLE, TH' BIG OFF-SHORE WIND, BACK ON TH' PIER!—HE'S GOT SIX BOTTLES OF BEER COOLIN' IN TH' WATER—AN' TH' FISH THAT GOT AWAY, WILL BE BIGGER, AFTER EACH BOTTLE!

BEST FISH YARN HE TOLD WAS TH' ONE ABOUT TH' FISH THAT HAS A STOOGIE! IF IT THINKS TH' BAIT HAS A HOOK IN IT, TH' STOOGIE FISH TRIES IT FIRST!

THE WATER-FRONT LADS CALL IT "HOOPLES PIER"

## THE LONG SHORT STORY

By WILLIAMS

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